on reality transactions to 4-6% from the next fiscal to curb generation of black money;

(b) whether under this proposal the Centre is set to consider paying compensation to the States on revenue losses if they agree to lower stamp duty rate within the proposed band; and

(c) whether Maharashtra and Delhi have shown promising results by generating more revenue by lowering stamp duty thereby curbing circulation of black money in realty deals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMAR ISELJA): (a) to (c) Government approved the scheme of 'Urban Reforms Incentive Fund' on 28.6.2003 which provides for giving incentives to the State/UTs which are willing to carry out urban reforms out of the specified list. One of the reform relates to reduction of stamp duty to not more than 5% by the end of 2006-07 (Xth Plan). The Government of Delhi and Government of Maharashtra have agreed to reduce the stamp duty so that it is not more than 5% by the end of the Tenth Five Year Plan. Releases under Urban Reforms Incentive Fund are in the nature of incentives and are not compensation for any revenue losses.

Problems of Jhuggis

†2152. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme to tackle the problem of increasing Jhuggies in the cities; and

(b) the population inhabited in Jhuggies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) Slum development is a State subject. The State Governments formulate specific plans, programmes and schemes for development of slums in various towns/cities as per their priorities and make necessary provisions therefor in their respective State Plans. However, with a view to ameliorate the living conditions of the slum dwellers, a programme known as National Slum Development Programme (NSDP) was launched at the national level by the Government in August, 1996 for the development of urban slums.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Besides, a Centrally sponsored Scheme called Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY) was launched on 2.12.2001 with a view to ameliorating the conditions of the urban slum dwellers living below the poverty line who do not possess adequate shelter. The Scheme has the primary objective to facilitate the construction and upgradation of the dwelling units for the slum dwellers and to provide health and enabling urban environment through community toilets under Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, a component of the Scheme.

(b) Slum Development being a State subject, State Governments survey and take stock of slums/jhuggies in their respective States. However, the Town and Country Planning Organisation (TCPO) conducted a one time study on slums in 1995-96 and brought out a report titled "a Compendium on India Slums-1996". According to this report the slum population of India is estimated to be 6.18 crores in 2001.

An attempt was made for the first time during the Census of India, 2001 by the Registrar General of India to collect detailed data about slum population of the country but only in the cities/towns having 50.000 population or more based on 1991 census. As per the provisional figures of Census of India 2001, the slum population of such 607 towns/cities of the country is 4.03 crores approximately.

Foreign Investment in Housing

†2153. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of URBAN EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have sanctioned foreign investment in the house construction industry;

(b) the details of the basis on which sanction for foreign investment has been accorded;

(c) whether any assessment has been done before according sanction regarding average annual foreign direct investment for coming years; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the assessment of benefit which metropolitan cities, cities and towns are expected to get as a result thereof?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.